



# UPDATE

OF THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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## Advocates Gather For Mental Health Day On Capitol Hill

Being an advocate is hard work. No matter what interest you are working for, getting your viewpoint across to the right people is the key element in achieving one's goals.

Every year, member organizations of the Mental Health Advocates of Tennessee gather in Nashville to share information, meet state officials and relay the necessity of continued improvements and funding for the interests of those with mental illness.

Held on March 4-5, 2002, attendees participated in advocacy training, met their legislators and listened to many featured speakers.

*(Left to right) Elisabeth Rukeyser, commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, Reps. Roscoe Dixon (D-Memphis) and Sherry Jones (D-Nashville) were some of Tuesday's key speakers at the First Baptist Church on Capitol Hill.*

## Best Practice Guidelines Training Set for May

The DMHDD, along with Tennessee Voices for Children, Vanderbilt University Medical Centers' Division of Continuing Medical Education and Advocare of Tennessee, will host the "Best Practice Guidelines Training Conference" on May 15.

The event, scheduled from 1 -7 p.m. at the Airport Holiday Inn Select, is targeted to psychiatrists, primary care physicians, psychologists, health service providers, nurses, nurse clinicians, physician extenders, social workers and other health care professionals.

The conference will focus on:

- Promoting high quality of care for adults and children served by Tennessee's public health system
- Aiding in identification, evaluation and provision of effective treatment for persons with severe mental illness and serious emotional disturbance (SED)
- Promoting continuity of care through establishment of uniform treatment options and the best use of multi-disciplinary treatment resources

Registration is \$25 (which includes dinner). Exhibitors fees are \$100 for non-profits and \$250 for profit organizations. This activity has been approved by AMA-PRA credit. CEU's are available at a cost of \$13.

For more information call: Tennessee Voices for Children at 1 (800) 670-9882 or Gwen Hamer in the DMHDD at (615) 532-6510. For motel reservations, call (615) 889-7600.

## Seven Events Planned for Children's Mental Health Week Celebration

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. To help promote, celebrate and raise awareness of children's mental health issues, a Children's Mental Health Week Celebration will take place at seven sites across Tennessee on Saturday, May 11, 2002.

For more information about the event nearest to you or to order free Mental Health Awareness Ribbons, call Andrea Flowers at Tennessee Voices for Children—(800)670-9882 or in the Nashville area ((615) 269-7751.



## Update

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## Around the State

### McNabb Center Receives Three-Year Accreditation

The Helen Ross McNabb Center in Knoxville recently received a three-year accreditation from CARF (Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities). Accredited programs include:

- Mental health programs (adult case management, outpatient treatment and partial hospitalization; children and adolescent case management and outpatient treatment)
- Psychosocial rehabilitation program
- Alcohol and other drug programs (adult detoxification, residential and outpatient treatment; children and adolescents prevention, residential and outpatient treatment)
- Employment services programs

The McNabb center is a regional, not-for-profit integrated system of mental health, substance abuse and social services founded in 1948 by Helen Ross McNabb. It was the first community mental health center in

Tennessee. It now serves 21 east Tennessee counties through 21 locations. Over 8,000 children, adults and families are expected to receive services through the center this year.

### Beth Baxter Honored For Advocacy Efforts

Beth Baxter, M.D. staff psychiatrist at Park Center East in Nashville, recently received a national award from Eli Lilly and Company.

Baxter was presented the Lilly Reintegration "Public Eye" Award for her work as a mental health advocate on both the local and national levels. She was honored with other mental health professionals, patient advocates and organizations across the country for their work in raising awareness of mental health issues.



## Happenings

- Pat Levitt, Ph.D., chair of Neurobiology at the University of Pittsburgh, has been appointed director of the Kennedy Center in Nashville, effective June 2002.



- Hal Cato is the new executive director of Oasis Center, a 31-year-old Nashville non profit that advocates for teens. He was formerly with Bright Horizons Family Solutions and has served on the board of directors of Nashville CARES, Family and Children's Services and Bethlehem Center of Nashville.
- Scott Strang has joined Ridgeview Psychiatric Hospital and Center to fill the newly created position of chief operating officer. Strang, a licensed psychologist, recently received an MBA with a concentration in healthcare management from the Owen Graduate School of Management at Vanderbilt.



- The Volunteer Services Program at Lakeshore Mental Health Institute will celebrate its 50 'th anniversary on May 8, with a special celebration. The Grey Ladies of the American Red Cross started the program in 1952.
- The address for the West Tennessee Regional Office for MR Services has been changed to 8383 Wolf Lake Drive, Bartlett, TN 38122, phone (901) 213-1800.
- Richard Kirk was recently appointed director of social work at Woodridge Hospital. A licensed clinical social worker, Kirk formerly served as director of crisis response services at Frontier Health.
- Dr. Jon Garrison has joined Highland Rim Mental Health Center as staff psychologist. Garrison, with a master's in counseling from Regent University in Virginia and a doctorate in clinical psychology from George Fox University in Oregon, was formerly staff psychologist for Mountain Valley MHC in Jasper, TN.





# Around the State

## Center on Learning Disabilities to be Created By Kennedy Center

The U.S. Department of Education recently endowed Kennedy Center researchers in Special Education a grant to create a Center on Learning Disabilities.

Researchers will study issues surrounding the accurate and early identification of children with learning disabilities, continuing the work already started under the U.S. Office of Special Education Program's "Learning Disabilities Initiative."

The center will also design a system of disseminating information and providing technical assistance that links research to practice.

Doug Fuchs, professor of special education and co-director of the Kennedy Center's research program on learning accommodations for individuals with special needs, said that information on learning disabilities is vital to future research.

"This is a perilous time for the learning disabilities field," Fuchs said. "The validity of assessment and identification methods is frequently questioned. Many view special education costs as too high, and students with learning disabilities make up more than half of the special education population. Research is needed to address these questions and guide future legislation."

## Across The Nation

Howard University Hospital's Department of Psychiatry has been awarded \$6.5 million from the NIMH for a five-year project to implement and develop research studies pertaining to mood and anxiety disorders.

Dr. William B. Lawson, professor and chair of the department, is the principal investigator. Lawson, who is a past president of the Black Psychiatrists of America, was formerly the DMHDD's director of clinical services.

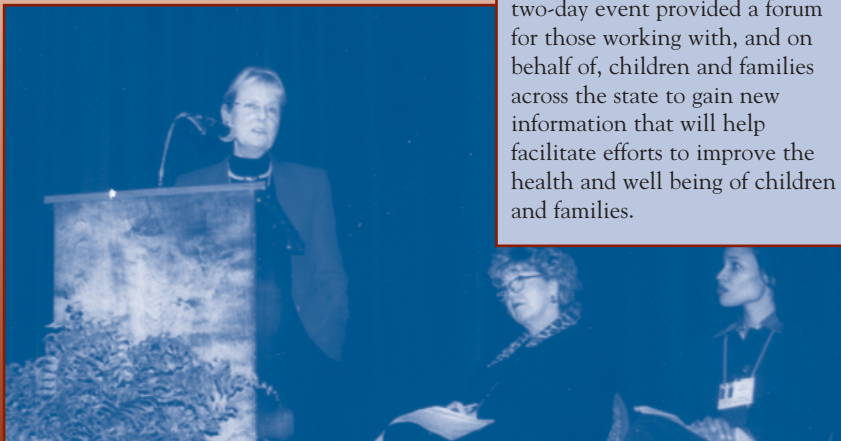
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From the **Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report** (February 22, 2002): More than 25 percent of uninsured adults between 18 and 64 with chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and depression said they did not get "needed" medical care at least once in the previous year.

This is compared with less than 10 percent of the privately insured with chronic conditions, according to a study released by the Center for Studying Health System Change. About 7.4 million individuals with chronic conditions did not have health insurance in 1999.

Update

## Children's Advocacy Days



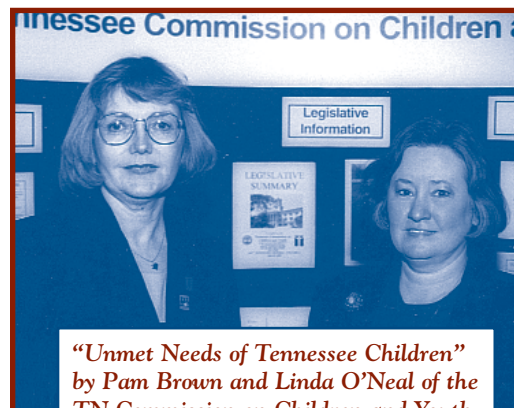
One of the event's many-featured speakers was the DMHDD's commissioner, Elisabeth Rukeyser (left).

The 14th Annual Children's Advocacy Days was held on March 5-6, 2002 at the War Memorial Auditorium in Nashville. The two-day event provided a forum for those working with, and on behalf of, children and families across the state to gain new information that will help facilitate efforts to improve the health and well being of children and families.

## Yes2Kids Conference

The DMHDD was one of 16 sponsors for The 3rd Annual Yes2Kids Conference held February 4-5 at the Cool Springs Conference Center in Franklin. The conference was designed for attendees to learn from nationally recognized trainers, network with colleagues and renew the commitment to improving lives of young Tennesseans.

Two of the 80 featured workshops/presentations included :



**"Unmet Needs of Tennessee Children"**  
by Pam Brown and Linda O'Neal of the TN Commission on Children and Youth  
—An overview of Tennessee's comparative rankings as indicators for children.

**Yes2Kids**



**"Building Developmental Assets for Youth"** by Sara Smith, Healthy Kids director with the Maternal and Child Health Section of the Department of Health

# Looking at MMHI's Learning Center

Empowerment has long been associated with fulfilling life goals and self-improvement.

It is with this understanding that staff at Memphis Mental Health Institute (MMHI) and its appointed Psychosocial Rehabilitation Committee (PRS) decided a change was needed. Too many times the same faces were seen being readmitted. They determined service recipients needed to be better taught how to function successfully in the community. So, on November 1, 2001, The Learning Center opened its doors to the entire institute population.

Infused with a concept of centralized, group programming, instead of the more typically used unit-based method, the center's officials hope this approach will give the program an educational edge.

From 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., five days a week, all service recipients and direct care staff attend four classes per day (20 each week). The number of service recipients varies depending on the census (usually between 75-95). Each class is supervised by two leaders who, besides instructing, write progress notes on every service recipients. At the close of each week, MMHI's treatment team reviews the observations and notes the individuals' progress.

Josie Crane, director of The Learning Center, believes the program opens up new levels of learning and understanding between both the staff and service recipients.

"By offering group treatment in a centralized location, we have been able to pool our staff resources," Crane said. "Patients have access to every ounce of experience and

talent we've got. And then there's the group experience itself. Patients are often able to help each other in ways the staff cannot. They've walked the same road and can alert another to the pitfalls."

Crane develops the schedule of groups that meet the needs of the service recipients, ensures that a sufficient number of qualified staff conducts the groups and acts as a liaison between The Learning Center and the Treatment Planning Department. But, instead of classes being totally mandated from above, service recipients, who participate, have input. Planning treatment together helps address individualized goals and necessary treatment objectives.

There are about 180 classes in 12 categories. These include: anger management, medication education, dual diagnosis, coping skills, health issues, adult daily living skills, illness awareness, symptom control, development of leisure interests, after-care, forensic issues and personal development.

The program has received praise from both staff and service recipients alike.

"It's fun seeing the excited and satisfied look on the faces of staff as they tell a success story from one of their classes," Crane said.

One PSR technician stated that a service recipient who was depressed, tearful and hostile, two weeks before entering the program, was observed de-escalating another by saying the right words...from topics she had learned in the group sessions.

"Bobbie" said he has seen a change in his life since undergoing treatment.

"It got me up and moving when I didn't want to" he said. "I was very depressed. I was like... 'Leave me alone'... 'Go away.' If you

had seen me 30 days ago, you wouldn't believe it. They give you the tools. You know you have to go out and make it work."

One technician said that while success doesn't happen overnight, progress was being made daily. Service recipients have been entering and leaving MMHI, but it hasn't been the same ones since the program began. They're staying out in the community longer.

And that's a giant step for many people.

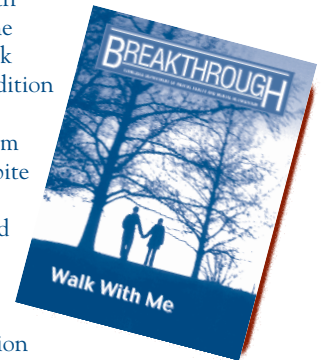
MMHI, under the direction of Chief Officer Michael Coppol, is located at 865 Poplar Avenue in Memphis.

*Left: Psychiatric technician LeSher Townsend assists with a "Self Expression Through Art" class project.*

## Breakthrough to Feature Mental Health Programs

An issue of DMHDD's **Breakthrough** Magazine that is at the printer will feature programs throughout the state relating to mental health services. The special "Walk With Me" edition looks at programs from RIP and respite to dual diagnosis and housing.

When finished, the publication will be placed on the department's website at [www.state.tn.us/mental](http://www.state.tn.us/mental). Look for **Breakthrough** and the department's other publications as well as programs, licensure laws, etc on the site.



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